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COURTSHIP.

COURTSHIP, like most other matters relating to love and matrimony, may be said to present abundant scope for eccentric and original developments. It is a course of proceeding which is regulated by no fixed principles or general formulæ. The symptoms are as variable as the weather, and neither precepts nor examples are of much avail, because the policy which may in one case prove eminently successful, may in another result in the most lamentable failure. There is no definitive rule, even on such a fundamental point as whether the initiative and active negotiations shall devolve upon the lady or the gentleman. There are fortunate individuals of both sexes whose fate, we confess, fills us with envy.

According to popular tradition, it is the special prerogative of the fair sex to be wooed and won; but this is not by any means an invariable rule. It has many exceptions; and some who profess to speak from personal experience as well as extensive observation, go so far as to declare that in the majority of instances it is really the ladies who do the courting, though the initiative and other formal steps may ostensibly lie with the enamoured swain. A good deal might no doubt be said in support of this theory. Women have far more tact in the management of such affairs than men, who invariably evince a remarkable propensity for 'putting their foot in it.' The subject, moreover, is one in which the ladies are supposed to be more nearly concerned. As Byron says:

Man's love is of man's life a thing apart,
'Tis woman's whole existence.

While a man may have a hundred different objects and ambitions in life, and may leave his matrimonial fate in great part to chance, there is seldom any object which bulks so largely in a girl's prospects as that of being well matched, and, as the phrase goes, 'comfortably settled' as partner in a good matrimonial firm. It need, therefore, be no matter of

surprise that our fair sisters should so often be found angling in the waters of the social world for what their luck may bring them in the shape of a husband; and there is considerable common-sense, as well as piquant humour, in what the heroine of a popular new comedy has to say to her girl-friend as to the responsibility which devolves on a dutiful young lady of paving the way and 'leading up' to a declaration and proposal.

We remember listening to a remarkable address on this subject by an oratorical Quakeress, who seemed strongly disposed to assign to man the place of the wooed, rather than that of the wooer. 'My friends,' she observed, 'there are three things I very much wonder at. The first is, that children should be so foolish as to throw up stones, clubs, and brickbats into fruit-trees, to knock down fruit; if they would let it alone, it would fall itself. The second is, that men should be so foolish, and even so wicked, as to go to war and kill each other; if let alone, they would die of themselves. And the third and last thing I wonder at is, that young men should be so unwise as to go after the young women; if they would stay at home, the young women would run after them.'

Notwithstanding this lucid train of reasoning, it is to be hoped young men will not do anything so ungallant and unmanly as to stay at home and neglect what has all along been their peculiar privilege. A man may be so highly favoured by fortune that his rank, wealth, genius, or personal qualities enable him to outshine all rivals, and to regard wooing and winning as for him almost synonymous terms; but to allow any such considerations to influence his conduct in a matter of this kind, would not only be an evidence of the worst possible taste, but would be a flagrant outrage on all the laws of chivalry. On the other hand, a man may be so bashful and awkward in the matter as to require so much encouragement, that all the courting may very fairly be said to come from the other side. But in both cases—apart from

psychological subtleties and too-curious matter-of-fact observations—the man's proper and natural place, in our view at all events, is that of a humble and respectful suppliant at the shrine of beauty, grace, and virtue.

The inauguration of a courtship may occur in a thousand different ways. In some instances it can be traced back to the innocent companionship and confidences of early childhood; in others, it springs from the sudden inspiration of what is called 'love at first sight.' We have before us a curious old-fashioned *Letter-writer*, which seems to supply epistolary prescriptions for almost every exigency of human life. A section of the work is devoted to showing how letters ought to be written on matters relating to love, courtship, and marriage. One of the most interesting specimens—especially as showing how a courtship might have been initiated in the less conventional days of our grandfathers—purports to be 'From a young man suddenly captivated at the playhouse.' 'The charms of your person'—says the 'young man suddenly captivated'—'which appeared to such advantage last night at the playhouse in Covent Garden, have totally deprived me of my heart. I flatter myself my glances were not altogether disagreeable, as I did not perceive any token of disdain. I am therefore encouraged, though a stranger, to make this humble acknowledgment of my love; and, if you will honour me with an interview, in the presence of any relation, will satisfy you, and those whom it may concern, with respect to my parentage, connections, profession, and all other matters that should be known previous to an allowed familiarity. Presuming, unless a fatal pre-engagement prevents, that you will comply with my request, seeing that my designs are apparently honourable, I remain, waiting with the utmost impatience for an answer, &c.'

To this epistle, the young lady's papa replies, the prescribed form of his answer being so far favourable as to arrange for an interview. All this is delightful; but it is hardly considered quite proper nowadays for a young lady at the play to treat the 'glances' of strange young men with anything else than 'disdain,' or, at all events, apparent unconsciousness; and the chances are ninety-nine to a hundred that such an epistle would now be instantly consigned to the fire or waste-basket. The illustration, however, recalls the story of a certain celebrated actress who on one occasion received the following original declaration, which, one may safely presume, was certainly not copied from a *Letter-writer*: 'MADEMOISELLE—I am only a poor worker, but I love you like a millionaire. While waiting to become one, I send you this simple bunch of violets. If my letter gives you a wish to know me, and to answer to the sentiments of my soul, when you are on the stage to-night, lift your eyes to the gallery; my legs will hang over.'

The compiler of the *Letter-writer* above referred to displays a singular amount of ignorance with regard to the attitude generally assumed on such occasions by the 'stern parent,' who, even in the

'good old times,' very seldom met the advances of those who, though utter strangers, presumed so to seek his daughter's hand with such agreeable courtesy. The difficulty of securing the consent of the young lady's parents has always been one of the greatest obstacles in the course of true love. In order to overcome that difficulty, or to find opportunities to carry on the courtship in spite of it, many a singular device has been resorted to. Here are two rather entertaining illustrations.

A young gentleman fell in love with the daughter of his employer; but the different social status of the pair seemed to preclude all hope of a successful issue, the young lady's papa sternly forbidding any further progress in the matter, and denying the young man the privilege of continuing to visit at his house. The situation appeared almost hopeless; but feminine ingenuity rose to the occasion. The old gentleman was in the habit of wearing a cloak, and the young couple made him the unconscious bearer of their correspondence. The young lady would pin a letter inside the lining of her father's cloak, and when the old gentleman threw off the garment in the counting-house, her lover would take the earliest opportunity to secure the valued missive and to send back his reply in the same manner. Love and ingenuity were finally successful. The other case was that of an American young lady whose friends refused to ratify her choice and approve her betrothal. The expedient she hit upon was simple, but effective. She just went to bed, declaring her determination to remain there till her parents gave their consent, which occurred in less than a fortnight. It was found by that time to be less expensive and more agreeable to call in the lover than the doctor.

So much for what may be called the parental difficulty; but what about the success of the lover in finding favour in the eyes of his adored? The pleasures of courtship are no doubt very great, but they will become as ashes to the palate if they end in final rejection. As a transatlantic poet pathetically remarks:

'Tis sweet to love; but, ah! how bitter
To love a gal, and then not git her!

It is often extremely difficult to know exactly how to achieve success in love. We cannot all be great, or beautiful, or even supremely good; but next to realising all these conditions in one's-self, it is important to believe, or, at all events, to make the young lady believe, not only that she herself is beautiful and good, but that she possesses those qualities in sufficient plenitude to make up for your manifold deficiencies. Even in this direction, however, there is danger; and the lover will do well to bear in mind the experience of an abandoned suitor, who, when asked why he had been rejected, replied: 'Alas, I flattered her till she became too proud to speak to me.'

Touching this same subject of flattery, a lady was asked on one occasion why plain girls often get married sooner than handsome ones; to which she replied, that it was owing mainly to the tact of the plain girls, and the vanity and want of tact on the part of the men. 'How do you make that out?' asked a gentleman. 'In this way,' answered the lady. 'The plain girls flatter the

men, and so please their vanity; while the handsome ones wait to be flattered by the men, who haven't the tact to do it.' There have been cases, however, in which the situation presented here has been reversed, and plain, even ugly men have succeeded in making themselves so agreeable to young ladies as to become their accepted suitors. Here is a case in point. When Sheridan first met his second wife, who was then a Miss Ogle, years of dissipation had sadly disfigured his once handsome features, and only his brilliant eyes were left to redeem a nose and cheeks too purple in hue for beauty. 'What a fright!' exclaimed Miss Ogle, loud enough for him to hear. Instead of being annoyed by the remark, Sheridan at once engaged her in conversation, put forth all his powers of fascination, and resolved to make her not only reverse her opinion, but actually fall in love with him. At their second meeting, she thought him ugly, but certainly fascinating. A week or two afterwards, he had so far succeeded in his design that she declared she could not live without him. Her father refused his consent unless Sheridan could settle fifteen thousand pounds upon her; and, in his usual miraculous way, he found the money.

Those who have read George Eliot's *Felix Holt* will remember how Felix, though himself a rough unpolished workman, gained the love of a refined and delicately reared young lady, not by flattering, or even attempting to please and gratify her, but by chiding, depreciating, and almost despising her because she read Byron, and knew nothing of the heavy mental pabulum on which he himself was wont to feed. She at first was dreadfully vexed and offended; but by-and-by she came to believe that Felix had a grand moral ideal, beside which her own was frivolous and insignificant; and striving to emulate his exalted motives and views of life, she made him her *beau idéal*, with, of course, the usual result. In theory, or in a novel, this is no doubt all very fine; but in everyday life the mode of procedure adopted by Felix Holt would be, to say the least, decidedly risky, and would very probably end disastrously. It is always safer to risk a little flattery.

Happy is the wooing,
That is not long a-doing,

says the old couplet; but a modern counsellor thinks it necessary to qualify the adage by the advice: 'Never marry a girl unless you have known her three days, and at a picnic.' In this, as in other matters, it is always desirable to hit the happy medium. Marrying in haste is certainly worse than a too protracted courtship; though the latter has its dangers too, for something may occur at any time to break off the affair altogether, and prevent what might have been a happy union. It may always be concluded there is a screw loose somewhere if Matilda is overheard to say to her Theodore, as they steam up the river with the excursion: 'Don't sit so far away from me, dear, and turn your back on me so; people will think we're married.'

A friend of Robert Hall, the famous English preacher, once asked him regarding a lady of their acquaintance, 'Will she make a good wife for me?' 'Well,' replied Mr Hall, 'I can hardly say—I never lived with her!' Here Mr Hall touched the real test of happiness in married life. It is

one thing to see ladies on 'dress' occasions and when every effort is being made to please them; it is quite another thing to see them amidst the varied and often conflicting circumstances of household life.

ONE FALSE, BOTH FAIR;

OR, A HARD KNOT.

CHAPTER XXXVI.—THE MOUNTAIN PICNIC.

THE Mountain Picnic, long projected, and of which some of the ladies at New Hatch had prattled as of a dangerous expedition into Wild Wales, at last came off. It had been delayed for some time by the uncertainty of the weather. Atlantic winds have it for their mission to convoy black rain-clouds; and blue peaks, and sharp saddle-backs, and curved corries fringed with dwarf-oaks and feathery ash-trees, ivy-grown, have a knack of attracting a downpour. But at length there came three glorious days, worthy of the Italian climate at its best, and all the preparations were made for an *al-fresco* banquet at Glyn Llewelyn. A lovely spot was this, high up on the mountain-side, yet accessible by an excellent road, girdled in by rocks, shaded by rowan-trees and hazel and alder, with its tinkling stream bordered by maiden-hair ferns and rare mosses, its tiny tarn, and a distant view of the waterfall of Gwent Pistyll, a puny cascade compared with Alpine or Norwegian cataracts, but respectable in Wales, and with Tor Coch and Combe Dhu rising in their sullen majesty overhead. All the landscape, all in sight, crag and peak and tableland, formed part of the Leominster estate. The red rocks of Tor Coch and the gloomy heights of Combe Dhu were just as much a part of the Castel Vawr property as were the fat cornlands and rich green pastures on the English, or, according to local parlance, the Saxon side of the March.

Sir Timothy Briggs was anxious still, in spite of the fine weather, which was enough for his more sanguine guests; just as captains of New York ocean steamers are miserable until they are round Cape Race, and safe from blinding fogs, drifting icebergs, and headlands of ruthless granite. Sir Timothy felt as if his reputation as a successful entertainer very much depended on the manner in which this particular festivity should go off. It was very late in the autumn for a picnic, certainly; but then the weather was remarkably warm, as it is often warm, at unseasonable times, in Wales, where the breath of the Gulf Stream tempers the bleakness of the air. Yet Welsh weather is fickle to a proverb. Sir Timothy was always tapping and scrutinising his barometer in the outer hall; but the aneroid, like its master, appeared to be puzzled by the caprices of the Cambrian climate. Nor did his native gardeners and stablemen settle his doubts, when he sounded them as to the future. 'It is a clever day, quite, Sir Timothy, if she stops so,' was all that he could wring from the Ancient Britons around him.

Yet the carriages, a handsome array of them, set merrily off from New Hatch, sweeping swiftly between the dense nut-hedges on the English side of the border, and climbing the well-made road, that ran, steeply but smoothly, up the Welsh hill-sides, with their crofts and fences of dry stone

and wattled cottages, and patches of oats growing high aloft among the rocks, and being tardily reaped, until at last the scenery grew wilder, more rugged, and more picturesque, and Tor Coch, like a natural fortress, with red turrets and battlements flaming in the sun, rose up resplendent; while the sable loftiness of Combe Dhu frowned on the intruding pleasure-seekers. There was a little vapour hanging stealthily, as it were, about the ravines and wooded hollows of Combe Dhu; but otherwise, not a cloud was to be seen. The blue sky overhead might have been Tuscan or Roman, so bright and unsullied was its spotless azure. There was hardly a breath of wind. Far off, on the distant summits, here and there, a red-berried mountain-ash might be seen to toss its boughs, now and then, as if a gust had passed by; but the air was warm and balmy.

'How charming—how delicious!'—'We are fortunate, indeed, in our day.'—'Your own weather, Lady Juliana.'—'You are always lucky, I think, Sir Timothy.' Such were the cooing and complimentary comments of several of the ladies of the party from New Hatch.

Sir Timothy, who had grown suspicious, during his residence on the Border, looked askance at the filmy curtain that clung to the hollows and bushes of Combe Dhu, and, remembering previous disappointments, sincerely wished the day might end without spoiling of dainty hats and damage to elaborate toilets, and complexions more artificial still.

At last, just before Glyn Llewelyn was reached, a turn in the rocky road revealed the Leominster carriage, with the well-known liveries, and following it, a couple of breaks or *fourgons*, laden with servants and the materials of good cheer. For there are picnics and picnics, some of them, perhaps the blithest and the happiest, very scantily provided with creature-comforts, and rough as to accommodation; others, of which the commissariat arrangements leave nothing to be desired, but which may or may not be really mirthful merry-makings. On this occasion, we may be sure that only too bountiful preparations had been made, when two such caterers as Sir Timothy Briggs and Lady Barbara Montgomery had undertaken to labour for the common weal. And this would be a white-day in the memory of many a poor crofter's family, to whom the fragments of the feast afforded a luxurious treat, by contrast to the goats' milk and oatcake of everyday life. From high-lying hovels, the thatch of which needed to be kept in place by great stones, because of the furious winds that so often prevailed, and from huts that nestled in gorges of the hills, appeared a troop of juvenile rustics, children, some shepherd-lads and sheep-tending lasses, the rest barefooted very often, eager to carry a basket, or to fill a pail at the brook; or, more shyly, to present a tuft of wild-flowers; but all with hungry eyes, meekly expectant of eleemosynary remains of pies, and residues of joints, and half-eaten fowls, and bottles of wine half-empty, and white bread, to carry home with them.

One picnic is, after all, very much like another in some respects, and especially when it takes place in keen mountain air and at a considerable distance from home. The guests are sure, like emigrants at sea, to be most unromantically

hungry; and so it proved on this occasion. The champagne corks popped like a crackling discharge of musketry at a Volunteer Review; and the clatter of knives and forks, and the clink and clatter of plates and glasses, almost overpowered the dulcet strains of the music which it had been one of Sir Timothy's bright ideas to provide. As it was, the little orchestra had been established behind a thicket of rowan-trees and hollies, and the musicians blew and twanged their best; while the owner of New Hatch felt as if, should the day, according to the ambiguous dictum of his Welsh servants, remain 'a clever' one to the last, the Glyn Llewelyn picnic would ever be an agreeable landmark in the memories of his visitors.

The one member of the company who seemed sad and silent was the youthful mistress of Leominster. She could not attune her mind, with all its melancholy thoughts, to the concert pitch that came so naturally to the rest; and towards the conclusion of the meal, she contrived to slip away unperceived, and to ramble slowly down the rugged path that bordered the brook, until presently she reached a spot where, in the midst of a ring of rocks—of fantastic shape, some of them—was a circle of emerald turf, starred with daisies, and bordered by broom and dwarf hazels. A narrow path crossed this grassy arena, and disappeared at the angle of a red rock, thirty feet high, that presented some quaint likeness to a human form, and was locally known as the Old Shepherd. Here she seated herself on a mossy knoll, listening, half-heedlessly, to the babble of the mountain stream as it leaped, a thread of silver, from one dark pool to another, on its swift downward course from the highlands to the river and the sea. Very, very unhappy, now that she felt herself secure from prying eyes, was the expression of her young face. There was wistful regret in her sad eyes, as, careless of what she saw, she turned them slowly from one object to another, almost as the blind do. It was plain that her thoughts were far away.

'It must go on, I suppose,' she murmured to herself dreamily—'it must go on, this marriage, on which I have received congratulations, more or less sincere, since first the engagement was made public. I shall feel the safer; and yet—ah, that I were back in Egypt again, with the tall reed-banks of the Nile around me, and the palms, and the blue lupine fields, instead of Welsh stones and Welsh heather; and that she—and I—— But we cannot live our lives over again, or alter the past,' she added with a mournful smile; and then grew pale and uttered a faint cry, as of alarm, as from behind the red rock called the Old Shepherd there suddenly appeared the figure of a man. Chinese Jack lifted his hat with ceremonious politeness.

'Forgive my awkwardness, My Lady Marchioness, if I was so unlucky as to startle you,' said the adventurer as he drew near.

'Why are you here?' asked the other as she lifted her eyes to meet those bold ones that belonged to Chinese Jack.

The man laughed. 'You ladies,' he said, in that strange tone which he was apt to use, and which perplexed his auditors as to whether he spoke seriously or not, 'might sometimes teach a lesson to diplomatists of the male sex, so

admirably do you dispose of wearisome preliminaries. I will try to give a straightforward answer to your Ladyship's direct question. I am here, Lady Leominster, because it is necessary that I should know whether it is to be peace or war—whether I am to be your champion, or to fight under the hostile flag. Either cause is good enough for a Dugald Dalgetty like myself.'

'Can you not leave me—can you not let me rest in peace?' asked the lady piteously.

'Now, My Lady Marchioness,' expostulated Chinese Jack, in really the tone of an injured man, 'the suggestion is too unreasonable. It is not often that poor buccaneering fellows like your humble servant see such a prize before them, in these prosaic days, as that which shines before me now. I have no preference, no bias at all; I am perfectly impartial. But I must, in obedience to the purest principles of political economy, sell myself to the highest bidder.'

Something in the cynicism of the man's speech, in his mocking voice and glittering eyes, galled the Marchioness into an outburst of anger. 'Wretch!' she exclaimed. 'I could almost believe, as I listen to you, that I was hearkening to, and looking on, the Fiend himself! How dared you'—She hesitated here, and her eyes drooped.

Chinese Jack laughed with unperturbed good-humour. 'As for what I dare, My Lady, Jack Rollington has proved that before to-day,' he answered; 'and as for my being here now, it is motivated by two causes, both cogent enough. The first is, that you are about to be married to Lord Putney. I wish you joy. But then the wedding will be so very soon, that it does not suit my plans to wait for it. It would make a difference, My Lady. Were you not still Marchioness of Leominster, you would at least be Viscountess Putney. My Lord has great influence. It would be used on his wife's behalf, and perhaps Jack Rollington would be left in the lurch. The second is, that you have promised me nothing.'

'You have had money,' said the girl wearily.

'What you call money, Lady Leominster, I have had,' was the polite answer of Chinese Jack; 'a trifle, a flea-bite, from a masculine standpoint; though ladies, I am aware, dread parting with every sovereign, as though it stood between them and starvation. On the other side, a hundred thousand pounds—no beggarly alms flung to a beggar, but a fortune—awaits my acceptance. All rests with me. I am not a moral sort of man; but it would save me trouble to deal with the party in possession. For ten thousand more than I am already promised by the opposing party, I will make you as safe from your sister'—

'I refuse! I will have none of your help; I will buy none of your counsel, none of your aid!' was the almost sullen reply.

Chinese Jack laughed gently. 'I have paid you, My Lady, the compliment of the first offer,' he said mildly. 'But there is a storm brewing.' He pointed to the sky, over the blue of which a dim haze, streaked by filmy threads, had been drawn, while above Combe Dhu were massed formidable banks of cloud. 'I know my native mountains, outlaw and exile as I am,' continued the adventurer bitterly; 'and every Welshman in your hire would tell you the same. Before long, there

will be dazzled eyes and draggled gowns. Even those chattering geese, your guests, see the mischief coming, for I hear their silly voices above, as they seek your Ladyship. Now or never! Am I to have the stake?'

'I refuse!' she answered, almost mechanically, like one who has learned a lesson by rote.

'Is that your last word?' demanded Chinese Jack, with a menacing frown.

'It is—it is! But I hear my friends' voices. Pray, leave me!'

'Certainly, My Lady. But now I shall know what to do,' answered the adventurer; and in a moment he had turned the corner of the red rock and disappeared; while, an instant later, fluttering feminine apparel, and choice hats, and huge embroidered parasols, became visible on the rocky pathway above, as Lady Flora and Lady Celia, and the Honourable Emily Tollemache, escorted by as many gentlemen, came hurrying down to express the alarm of the company in general, and of Lady Barbara and Lord Putney in particular, at the disappearance of the lady whom Chinese Jack had but that moment left alone. 'And especially with a dreadful thunderstorm coming on, dear Lady Leominster, and in such a place! Poor mamma, you know, dreads thunder so awfully.' And indeed the Dowager, who feared most things, was almost as much afraid of lightning as she was of importunate creditors.

The Honourable Algernon March was also of opinion that there was no time to be lost. 'I, for one, never expected a ducking; but in Wales here, as in Lorn or Skye, you can be sure of nothing,' he said.

The young lady allowed herself to be led away by her friends, as passively as a strayed sheep permits itself to be brought back to the flock. 'I was foolish to ramble as I did,' she said, with a wan smile. When the place of the picnic was reached, much bustle prevailed. Horses had been hastily bitted, traces made fast, and curb-chains linked, and carriage after carriage advanced to take up its load; while those who were ill off for wraps looked enviously at neighbours better provided with shawl and mantle, for barouches give scanty protection in such a downpour as was momentarily expected.

Of course Lord Putney was ready to place his affianced in her carriage. 'Truant!' he whispered tenderly, as he pressed the little hand that lay in his. 'How uneasy your absence has made me, dearest! I was about to scale'—

But before Lord Putney could enumerate the mountaineering exploits which he had been prepared to undertake for the recovery of his missing betrothed, a blinding flash, that made the horses swerve and rear, was followed by a deafening crash that seemed to shake the very earth, while every splintered rock sent back the deep diapason of the thunder. The wind shrieked. The heavy rain, mingled with arrowy sleet and jagged hailstones, came roaring down, as if in resentment on nature's part for the recent frivolous invasion of her fastnesses. The storm had burst in its strength. This was no time for delay, no time for pretty speeches. Off dashed the carriages down the steep road, the drivers anxious enough, with their hats pulled down over their knitted brows, and coat collars turned up, peering through the blinding rain and gathering gloom, and keeping the

frightened horses well in hand. Flash after flash, peal after peal, rang out and flared forth the symbols of elemental war; while every brook and rivulet swelled, with hoarse roar, into a turbid torrent, that here and there overflowed the road, causing the hoofs and wheels to scatter froth-bells and peat-stained water as they went. It was a confused rout, rather than an orderly retreat, guests, servants, musicians, snatching up what was nearest to hand, and scrambling in many cases for places in the vehicles, the impatient charioteers of which could scarcely restrain their scared steeds until the living load was in its place. On, on, through the drenching rain, the dazzling lightning, the growl of the thunder, and the scream of the gale, sped the fugitive revellers, some making for Castel Vawr, and the majority for Sir Timothy's mansion of New Hatch, as fast as wheels could hurry them. It was a thing to be remembered for years to come, that Mountain Picnic, and its abrupt and inopportune ending.

ORCHIDS.

BY A PRACTICAL GARDENER.

THE peculiar family of Orchids is a very scattered one, members of it being found in almost every quarter of the globe. From Siberia to the equator, from the equator to Port Jackson, all climates and situations seem to suit them. In grassy meadow and swampy bog; on chalky down and arid tableland; by the side of meandering stream and on the face of rocky precipice; clinging to the topmost branches of Brazilian forest-trees, and on the summits of Peruvian mountains; in the jungles of Borneo, and far up on the Himalaya, these interesting plants are to be found. The latest calculation of the number of distinct species of this family of flowering plants is stated to be no fewer than six thousand. With the exception of composite plants, which include eight thousand species, orchids are the most numerous family in the vegetable world. Pea-flowered plants come next with four thousand seven hundred species; and then grasses with four thousand five hundred.

Orchids are peculiar chiefly on account of their inflorescence, a peculiarity shared in alike by all the members of the family. In addition, many of the exotic kinds have roots and stems of eccentric construction. These peculiarities, however, do not detract from their beauty as flowers, many of them being regal in their charms. Some are of the most brilliant colouring, others are of softest rose. Some have the hue of apple-blossom; others are white as sea-bleached shells under the charm of frost.

On account of their unrivalled beauty, probably strengthened by a certain amount of difficulty attending their cultivation, many persons have taken a special delight in orchids. Perhaps yet another reason for attracting the attention of wealthy florists has been their comparative scarcity in this country up till a not very distant period; the only means by which their increase was appreciably effected being by the difficult and uncertain process of collecting the plants in their native habitats and importing them in a condition of impaired vitality. To the gardening public, therefore, alike with the botanist, the homologist, and the evolutionist,

this unique tribe of plants is one of commanding interest.

Till about twenty to thirty years ago, the cultivation of these flowers was confined to a very limited number of gardens; but within the last ten to twenty years, the number of cultivators has been wonderfully increased; and not only so, but the number of plants brought together and grown by a given cultivator at the present day, could hardly have been realised a quarter of a century ago. If at that time a garden contained in its greenhouses one or two hundred orchids, it almost amounted to a phenomenon to be amazed at. Now, a single variety is grown by the hundred. One gentleman has of *Odontoglossum Alexandrae* alone, the astonishing number of twelve thousand plants! At that time, again, orchids were cultivated in hothouses in company with other exotics. Now, it is common for separate structures to be devoted to orchids alone; and sorts remarkable for their beauty are housed by themselves in specially fitted hothouses. Specialists trained to grow these plants have *carte blanche* as to their assistants for the carrying out the details of their own particular course of treatment. At the same time, no expense is spared in purchasing new or rare sorts, in order to keep the 'collection' up to date.

At Stevens' Natural History Salerooms, London, thousands of plants are weekly sold by auction during the seasons of importation. At these sales may be seen trade-growers or their representatives; on occasion, a lord, smitten with the desire to form a collection; with baronets, bankers, lawyers, and City-men, some of them accompanied by their 'growers;' besides several followers of the honourable and ancient craft of gardening, intent on picking up a bargain. Before the hour of sale, these experts examine any lots they may intend to purchase, and know exactly what they want before the sale commences. Then, the auctioneer in a few words having directed the attention of his audience to distinguishing features of the plants to be sold, the sale begins. A slight difference in the colour of the flower, or in its shape or size, may result in the plants being sold for a few shillings each; or, on the other hand, in running them up to pounds. These plants are technically known as 'imported.' People unacquainted with them might well term them lifeless, so dried up and shrivelled is their appearance.

Though not a common occurrence, still it does occasionally happen that individual plants purchased at these sales, possibly for two or three half-crowns, turn out, on flowering for the first time, to be distinct in some important particular from all others of the same kind. When this happens, it is a windfall; and should the fortunate possessor wish to part with the plant, there are plenty of purchasers who would be anxious to secure the prize, at almost any price. It is quite a common thing to pay twenty, forty, and sixty pounds for some species which are always scarce; while as much as one hundred, one hundred and forty-seven, and in two or three instances, two hundred pounds, has been asked and received for certain rare varieties. (At a sale held during the past spring, one hundred and eighty-five and two hundred and fifteen guineas were paid for two

varieties of *Cattleya trianae*—four hundred and twenty pounds for two plants!) It must be understood that these long prices are not realised because of the magnitude of the plants as such, for most of these very dear morsels could easily be stowed away in the crown of one's hat. Neither is it because they surpass all others in beauty. Their value is acquired almost solely on account of rarity in the number of plants known to exist of the particular variety. In fact, it is no uncommon occurrence for a species to fetch guineas one year, and in the one succeeding, to become almost a drug in the market, to be bought at any price. Considerable speculation has of late years attended the culture of orchids. A man forms a collection, gets a name for it, and, in the course of a few years, advertises and sells his plants. The investment as an investment proves, generally, to be a paying one; and for that reason the practice is spreading.

The necessity of importing orchids to supply gaps made by decay and death, and to form and add to collections, is a recognised one. To-day it may almost be said to have resolved itself into a science. Many British, continental, and American nurserymen keep as part of their staff trained collectors, who ransack the forests of Mexico and Brazil, the highlands of New Granada and of India, the jungles of the Malay Peninsula, and the arid valleys of the Australian continent, in search of popular kinds, buoyed up with the hope of stumbling across some unknown beauty, which might in itself prove a treasure. Cargoes are weekly arriving in the great central port of London from North and South America, from South Africa or from Southern Asia, to be distributed in their thousands amongst those who, having the means to purchase, have also the will to cherish them.

Of the thousands of species known to science, only some thirty-five are found in this country. Kent is their chief habitat, that county being as noted amongst botanists on account of its orchids, as it is among the agricultural community for its hops and its extensive fruit-farms. Among these Kentish orchids are some of the most curious-looking flowers in existence. Here are the names of a few, descriptive enough to suggest something of their general appearance. Thus: the Fly Ophrys, the Bee Ophrys, the Spider Ophrys; the Man, the Toad, the Lizard, and the Butterfly Orchis; and, though not a Kentish orchid, the Ladies' Slipper. Of these, the last-named is the only kind possessed of beauty of appearance. Some of the common orchids indigenous to Great Britain are, however, beautiful flowers. A few years ago, in the course of a botanising ramble on the north-east coast, a group of these came on us as a very delightful surprise. After wandering over some miles of sandy, rush-grassy 'links,' destitute of all flowers save the pretty white bedstraw, partial to heathy ground, we at last reached cultivated land, and soon thereafter, a wet slip was stumbled on, where was the Broad-leaved Orchis (*Orchis latifolia*) growing in scores on the face of the banks. One of their number we could not resist transplanting, to consort with the bravest and gayest in our garden of hardy flowers. The same day, when passing down a damp and grassy lane, a colony of the Spotted-leaved Orchis (*O. maculata*) was discovered. They

possessed flower-spikes of extraordinary length, some being white, or nearly so. One of these is also to be found amongst our home flowers.

But it is to the exotic species we must turn to find the most gorgeously apparelled of Flora's subjects. Our native kinds, though some of them are beautiful in a quiet and unobtrusive way, are altogether eclipsed by the denizens of other countries. The Ladies' Slipper (*Cypripedium spectabile*) of the North American swamps is of an unapproachable tint of rose on a setting of clearest white. High upon the tree-tops, in the land of the Incas, the 'Flower of May' (*Laelia majalis*) appears as a nebulous cloud of grayish satin. The monkeys of Brazilian forests swing and leap and chatter in the midst of twisting, drooping orchids—yellows to be dreamed of, wonderful chocolates, and the most delicate of lilacs. Numerous large-flowered *Cattleyas* and *Laelias* dispute with these the clothing of the forest-trees, and cover the forest-paths with a floral canopy, which, dripping in the morning with rain-like dews, by mid-day forms a pleasant shade from the burning sun—a conservatory of Nature, with the sky for its roof. India is the home of wax-like *Vandas* and of many of the *Dendrobies*, the showiest of the tribe; some thyrsus-flowered in white or gold; some panicles of glorious shades; and some with drooping stems, wreathed from base to tip, with two or three flowered spikelets. From Java and the Philippine Islands come the exquisitely lovely Moth orchids (*Phalenopsis grandiflora* and *P. Schilleriana*); and so we might continue to write of the large-lipped *Sobralia macrantha*, of the curiously constructed *Masdevallias*, of the orange-crested *Celogyne*, of the Indian crocuses, the loveliest of variegated flowers, and any number of others equally worth mentioning.

Since the theory of the necessity for cross-fertilisation of plants has been established, the singular modifications in the flowers of orchids are explained at once. The structure of the flowers is such that it is impossible for an insect to introduce its proboscis into the nectary without its head at the same time coming in contact with the viscid disc to which the anther is attached, and which immediately glues itself to the insect. By a wonderful arrangement, the base of the filament supporting the anther depresses itself, and the anther along with it, so that the next flower visited by the insect receives the pollen masses immediately into the stigmatic disc, which is also viscid, and to which the pollen is at once attached. In some species, the most singular provisions for securing the cross-fertilisation of the plants are found to exist. As instances, the *Angraecum sesquipedale* of Madagascar has its nectary at the base of a horn-like pouch, measuring nearly a foot from its mouth to its lower end. A species of moth has been found possessed of a proboscis long enough to extract the sweets from this elongated receptacle. To secure the safety of this rather awkward appendage, the moth coils it up in rings, and hangs it up, as it were, out of the way until again needed. Many orchids have the lips hinged, in order to allow large insects to effect an entrance to the nectary. In the *Masdevallias* the sepals and petals are confluent, and insects can gain an entrance only by a small hole in the centre of the flower. *Mesopitridium sanguineum* has the

various parts of the flower so close together that only a very small aperture is left for the entrance of an insect. Many kinds have ridges on the lips, of the only apparent meaning for these being that they act as guides to insects crawling up the lip. In addition to the size of many of the flowers and their attractive colouring, orchids are in many kinds deliciously scented; indeed, they bear very much the same relation to flowers with regard to odour that the mocking-bird does to other feathered songsters in the matter of voice. We have them with the scent of violets and other popular flowers. Even the odour of hay is to be found in all fidelity to the original. They have also odours of their own which no stranger intermeddles with; the well-known vanilla being procured from an orchid.

Great numbers of orchids grow on the trunks and branches of trees. It must be understood, however, that although thus growing on the branches of trees, they obtain no portion of their sustenance from their nurses. They thus differ entirely from parasitical plants, which root into the substance of the plant itself and extract sustenance therefrom. Common examples of parasitical plants in this country are the mistletoe, found commonly on the oak and apple; the dodder, on clover; and the ergot, on grasses—the last-named parasite, however, being a fungus, and lately attracting some attention on account of its supposed authorship of the 'loup-ill' in sheep. No orchids of this kind exist in Great Britain, unless we except the Bird's-nest Orchis, which grows amongst dead beech-leaves. Even in this case, it would require some imagination to class it with the above.

We have only another matter to note in connection with this wonderful tribe of flowers, and that is their great capacity of seed-production. A single capsule of a *Maxillaria* has been found to produce the enormous quantity of one and three-quarter millions of seeds; yet, as a family of plants they are comparatively rare.

In conclusion, it may be noted that good collections of orchids are to be found in several Botanic Gardens; notably in Kew Gardens, London; in the Edinburgh Botanic Gardens; in the College Gardens, Dublin; in the Glasgow Botanic Gardens; and in the Old Trafford Botanic Gardens, Manchester. In and around all centres of population, private collections are now common, their owners as a rule being very willing to allow visitors interested in the plants to inspect the flowers.

POOR LITTLE LIFE.

II.

'WHAT a charming house!' said George involuntarily, to the undisguised delight of his cousins, as the carriage drew up at the door of Prospect Gardens.

It really was one of the finest houses in all the Liguanea plains. It was two stories high, and square in shape. But its somewhat inelegant form passed unobserved, so occupied was the eye in regarding the beauty of its site, its environment of gigantic trees, the grateful coolness of its luxurious verandas, and their lavish adornment of plants and flowers and creepers. The upper and lower piazzas were closed in with jealousies, to

fend off the tropical sun. A square porch, paved with white marble, with two broad flights of steps of the same material, projected in front; whilst its roof, supported by wooden pillars, and surrounded with a graceful iron railing, formed a terrace from which a magnificent prospect could be obtained of all the flat, well-wooded, Liguanea plains, with Kingston and the coral reef of the Palisades in the middle distance, and the waveless Caribbean Sea—golden or peach-coloured or rose-red or silver, according to the hour of the day—for a background. The pillars of the porch were wreathed with jasmine and the wax-plant. Orchids of brilliant hue and uncouth shape, crimson and white, orange and chocolate-brown, hung in wire-baskets from the roof; and on each of the strides of its marble steps stood a couple of gigantic flower-pots of blue Indian china, filled with eucharis or bletia, maiden-hair ferns or dwarf-palms, myrtles or sweet-scented lilies. The terraced drive in front of the house was hedged with stephanotis; whilst a belt of sweet-smelling trees and shrubs—the frangipani, the tree-mignonette, the lime, the orange, and the Martinique rose—with a couple of fountains placed in the midst of its umbrageous greenery, shut it off from the extensive pastures and fields of Guineagrass, without which no Jamaica penn would be complete.

Entering from the porch, the visitor found himself in a spacious piazza, fitted up with hat-racks and tables, something after the fashion of an English hall.

Underneath the porch, holding a large, white, lace-edged parasol above her head, was Mrs Durham, ready to receive her nephew. She looked like a picture, as she stood waiting there, in the midst of the flowers and the creepers. Although she was nearly fifty years of age, she might easily have passed for thirty. Time and Fortune had dealt very gently with her. Her figure was still as lithe and willowy as a girl's. Her features were regular and refined. Her eyes were dark and of unwonted brilliancy. She was dressed in some soft cream-coloured Indian stuff, with bows of cardinal at neck and wrist.

'Welcome to Prospect Gardens, George!' she said, in that clear low voice which was one of her chiefest charms; and then she kissed him, just as his mother might have done.

He thanked her, still retaining her hand. 'I would have known you anywhere, aunt,' he remarked. 'You're just like Evelyn's elder sister.'

Sibyl clapped her hands. Eleanor made him a stately courtesy. Evelyn blushed, for her mother had been a famous toast amongst the planters in her younger days; and George, as he entered the house with these four fair women clustering round him, felt he had gained the hearts of the whole family by his simple and unpremeditated remark.

'Now George,' said Mrs Durham, after she had shown him his room, 'breakfast is ready, and I daresay you are hungry. But if you would like a bath first, we could keep it back for twenty minutes; though,' she added, laying her hand upon his, 'I would not advise it; I think you had better wait till the afternoon, when you're cool. You must wait till you're acclimatised, before you take liberties with yourself.'

George said he would wait for his bath.

In a few minutes they were seated at one of those bountifully spread tables which make a West Indian breakfast a thing much to be remembered by the traveller in after-days. The long square mahogany table, with its snowy cloth, its flowers, its fruits, and its antique silver, groaned under a profusion of dishes all new to George, who failed not to do ample justice to the inviting repast. In addition to such ordinary fare as spatchcock, salmon cutlets, and the regulation ham and egg, there was a fricassée of chickens with tomatoes, which George declared it was worth while coming to Jamaica to taste. There was calapiver roe—the salmon of the tropics—which melted in one's mouth as if it had been some delicious sweetmeat. There was a prawn curry, to which George insisted upon helping himself twice. There was a dish of soft-skinned turtle eggs, nestling in a bed of the greenest parsley. There were half-a-dozen different sorts of 'bread-kind'—roasted plantains, bread-fruit, the purple Indian yam, the delicate chestnut-tasted sweet-potato. There was a salad of lettuce and water-cress, fresh and crisp as if plucked that morning from some shady garden in rural England. There was the avocado or alligator pear, the only known vegetable substitute for, and in the opinion of some, superior to, butter. For the fruit-course, there was a dish of sapadillas, just lifted from the ice-chest; a Ripley pine, than which the glasshouses of an English millionaire could produce no finer. Grapes there were, and oranges with the green leaves on their stems just as they came from the trees. Iced claret was principally used to wash down this plenteous repast. But tea and coffee were on the table; and chocolate made by Cubans in Jamaica.

'And now, George,' said Mrs Durham, leading the way to the veranda, when breakfast was over, 'sit down on that rocking-chair, light your cigar, and tell me about your mother.'

III.

The day passed like a dream. About the hour of four, callers commenced to arrive—the Colonial Secretary, his wife and daughters; half-a-dozen officers from Up Park Camp; the Commodore from Port-Royal; Captain Hillyard and little Maud Longton; heads of departments with their womenkind—the best and pleasantest society of which the colony could boast.

At five, came afternoon tea; and then about six, the carriage was ordered round, and Mrs Durham and her daughters started with George for their evening drive. They got back just in time to bath and dress for their eight o'clock dinner, which was a repetition, on a still more lavish scale, of the bountiful feast of the morning. After dinner, the ladies sat out on the terrace, George smoked his cigar, and Evelyn sang in the dark drawing-room beyond. By half-past ten, the whole family were in bed; and by eleven, all but George were asleep. But for him slumber was out of the question. Despite all the instructions which he had received, he had not succeeded in managing his mosquito net. One bloodthirsty tormentor had entered with him inside the curtains, when he had made his quick and crafty plunge; and now, exulting in its triumph, it was

determined to exact from him the full fruits of its victory. It was not every day that it got a feast of fresh English blood. Whirring, booming, buzzing, 'pinging' around him, now settling on his forehead, and darting its maddening fangs into his flesh; now rotating wildly about his head in search of a still more juicy morsel; now tauntingly humming behind his ear; now derisively careering throughout the length and breadth of the bed; now resting, though not yet satiated, far out of reach of his handkerchief, on the very top of the curtains—it goaded him almost into frenzy. It was his own fault—that was the worst of it; for Mrs Durham, anxious to secure for her nephew a good night's rest, had offered to send the butler to tuck him in, and to brush out the curtains after he was himself in bed. But with English self-confidence, he had scornfully refused it. It was not the loss of actual sleep that he so much begrudged, though to a young and healthy man of his age this was an unwonted and disagreeable position. He would have been content to lie still, outside his single sheet, and calmly review the events of the day. He would have gone over again in memory his merry drive from the wharf, his warm reception at Prospect Gardens; have thought over all his aunt's quaint negro stories, all the children's odd remarks; oftener than all, he would have conjured up Evelyn's fair face, and reproduced to its veriest jot and tittle every word of his conversation with her during the day. But even this resource was denied him. More cruelly tormented than a prisoner under sentence of death, he was not permitted to indulge in the luxury of reflection. Surely the tortures of a captive in the dungeons of the inquisition, with a single drop of water falling at regular intervals on his shaven head, were nothing compared with the malignity of his unseen tormentor.

Fortunately for him, the heat was not excessive. All the windows of his chamber were open; and through the chinks of the closed jalousies the night-winds came rushing down from the hills, filling the room with their cool, balmy, refreshing breezes. Towards four o'clock, he rose, threw open the jalousies, and gazed out upon the scene. The sky was cloudless, clear, and lit up with an infinity of stars. The Southern Cross was right above his head. The full fair moon poured down a flood of silver light upon the sea. He could see the black hulls of the ships-of-war at Port-Royal. The outlines of their masts and rigging were distinctly visible against the luminous background of the water. The cocoa-nut trees on the Palisades stood out like Corinthian columns against the glistening sky. The lighthouse, like the eye of a cyclops, cast a lurid glare over the harbour.

As he gazed, a stillness as of death seemed to fall upon the scene. Not a sound was heard; not a leaf stirred; even the myriad voices of the tropical night were for the moment hushed. Suddenly a faint light appeared on the eastern sky; then a rosy flush, like the sudden outbreak of a great conflagration, illumined the landscape. The moon paled—one solitary star retaining its brilliancy long after that of the others had gone. A gentle twittering of birds was heard. A white screech-owl flapped heavily across the pastures on its way to its hiding-

place in a neighbouring cotton-tree. And then, like an exiled monarch returning to his kingdom, uprose the glorious sun, and it was day once more.

He bathed his face and his hands, returned to his couch, and had an hour or two of refreshing sleep. When he awoke, the torrid sun was pouring into his apartment; and by his bedside, looking the very incarnation of coolness in his white jacket and white trousers, stood John the butler, with a cup of fragrant coffee and a plate of crisp cassava cakes on a silver salver in his hand.

'Missis hope you hab slep' well, Sa Garge! an' if you will please to get up, you will fine de young ladies in de piazza.'

There was considerable excitement in the church of Halfway Tree, when the party from Prospect Gardens, with the young English baronet in its train, put in an appearance at service that morning. The news of his arrival had spread abroad; and from the rector in the reading-desk, to the smallest negro girl with bare feet and starched petticoats who sat round the steps of the font, the eyes of the congregation were fixed on the stranger. As for George, the quaint little church and its occupants were objects of interest as attractive to him as he was, without knowing it, to the remainder of the congregation. Never before, he thought, had he said his prayers in such a heterogeneous company. All official Jamaica was there, from the Governor to the humblest clerk in the Colonial Secretary's office—official Jamaica, clad in white hats and black frock-coats, with blue or scarlet or bird's-eye neckties, patent-leather shoes, and white umbrellas. All the Christian beauty of the plains was there, dressed after the latest English fashions, with green veils to shade its charms from the sun, and palm-leaf fans to protect its somewhat mixed complexion from the heat. And all the negro population of the district was there, every man looking, to Sir George's unaccustomed eyes, the counterpart of the other; and all, males and females alike, displaying an unctious and a fervour of devotion, conjoined—to judge by appearances—to an absorbing love of dress.

The service was short, plain, and impressive. The briefest of rectors, in the briefest of surplices, gave the briefest of sermons. The music was good, and would indeed have been excellent, had the choir not been drowned by the strident voices of the negroes. One feature of part of the service particularly attracted the baronet's attention, and that was when the rector amplified the well-known petition in the litany into 'from lightning, earthquake, and tempest.' This, coupled with the many references to fever, pestilence, and hurricane on the mural tablets on the walls, far more than the differences of colour and feature which he saw around him, convinced George that at last he was really in Jamaica.

When the service was over, the most of the negroes collected in the churchyard to see the negroes drive away. The square in front of the church was crowded with buggies and carriages; and whilst their vehicles were being brought up, the gentry themselves, clustering in groups under the shade of the trees, exchanged salutations with one another, discussed the sermon or their neighbour, or made appointments for Badminton and lawn-tennis parties for the remainder of the week.

'It puts me in mind of the vestibule of Her Majesty's Theatre on an opera-night,' said George to Evelyn. 'Do you remember, Evelyn, when my mother took you and me to our first opera?'

'Yes. It was *Faust*. I thought I had never seen or heard anything so beautiful.'

'Oh, there's the Governor got mother in tow!' exclaimed Eleanor, breaking in upon their conversation. 'They're talking about you, Cousin George.—Look! there's mother beckoning to you. You'll have to go. I would not like to be you; he's such a cross old thing, is the Governor.'

But His Excellency was all complacency in the presence of the young English baronet. He introduced him to Lady Longton; and her Ladyship, as an especial mark of favour, let the tips of her lemon-coloured glove rest for a moment in his hand.

'I was sorry Lady Longton and I were out when you called yesterday, Sir George. It was not a visiting-day, as perhaps Mrs Durham may have told you; but we should have been glad to have seen you. I hope, however, to do myself the pleasure of returning your call in person at an early date; and I trust that during your stay in Jamaica, we may have the pleasure of seeing a good deal of you. I had the honour of your father's acquaintance—the late Sir Arthur Durham—I hardly like to say how many years ago. We were boys at Eton together; and though your uncle had ceased to be Attorney-general before I came to the colony, I have had occasion, more than once, to express publicly my sense of the invaluable service he rendered to the island. I hope Mrs Durham or some of your charming cousins will often bring you over to Queen's House. I shall tell Hillyard that we shall always be at home to you.'

'Aunt,' said Sir George, as they drove off from the churchyard gate, 'what am I to do? I have not brought a court-suit with me; I had no notion it would be required.'

Mrs Durham laughed.

'I told you Sir William was not popular,' said Evelyn. 'You can understand the reason now.'

But whatever exception George might be disposed to take to His Excellency's high sense of his own importance, he had no reason to complain of Sir William's want of civility.

The next day, the Governor called on Sir George. He had scarcely gone, when an orderly arrived with an invitation to dinner for the following evening.

'It is not a "command" this time, George,' said Mrs Durham. 'I think we had better go. The Queen's House little dinners are always pleasant, though I can't say the same for the official ones. You'll meet some of the nicest people in the island. The Chief Justice and Lady French are sure to be there; and General Short, the Director of Roads; and very likely the Commodore.'

It turned out as Mrs Durham had predicted, a very pleasant little party. All the persons whom she had mentioned were present, and in addition, a couple of rich planters—non-official members of the Legislative Council, and as such entitled to the colonial distinction of being styled the Honourable—one of whom, a Mr Da Costa, was accompanied by two very pretty young Jewesses, his daughters, to whom the Commodore paid assiduous attention.

When dinner was announced, Sir William gave his arm to Lady French; Lady Longton followed with Sir George; and then the rest of the company in the strict order of precedence. Captain Hillyard and Evelyn brought up the rear.

'I hope, Sir George,' said the Governor, addressing him across the table, 'you intend to make the round of the island. You cannot say you have seen Jamaica, if you don't. Kingston is no more Jamaica than London is England. Every parish in the island—a parish with us, you know, is the same as a county in England—has its own distinguishing characteristics. Even the patois of the peasantry is different in Westmoreland from what it is in Portland, for example.'

'I should like to do so very much, Sir William, but my stay is limited. I must leave for home the first mail after Christmas; and I believe November is a bad time for travelling in Jamaica.'

'Yes; we have our autumnal rains—our "seasons," as we call them—then. Still, this is only October. You might do it all before the rains commenced, if you started at once.'

'But that,' said Mrs Durham, joining in the conversation, 'we cannot allow my nephew to do. He has come out to make the acquaintance of his relations, Sir William, and he has not had time to do so yet.'

'Ah! my dear Mrs Durham,' replied the Governor gallantly, 'that alters the case entirely. Interesting as an extended study of our social peculiarities would undoubtedly be to Sir George, he has an infinitely more charming study nearer home;' and he bowed to Mrs Durham with the grace of a courtier.

'Nevertheless, your Excellency,' broke in Mr Campbell, the Custos or Lord Lieutenant of St Ann's—a shrewd Scotchman, who prided himself in keeping up the old Jamaica traditions of hospitality—'nevertheless, if Sir George Durham could spare time to take a run over to the North Side, I'm sure he would be both delighted and amused.—We have the finest estates, sir,' he continued, addressing himself to the baronet, 'in our parish. It's called the Garden of Jamaica—and the best lot of negroes in the island. If you want to know what Quashie is really like, you must go to the sugar-estates. Your Kingston nigger is a poor creature—a poor feckless creature. But for the real article, you'll have to go to the country.'

'I always thought the finest peasantry would be found in Manchester,' said the Governor. 'At anyrate, they are the most money-making and the most independent. When I was in Manchester last, I was shown a negro who had saved two thousand pounds, and had bought a large coffee-piece besidea. It is not often one meets with a thrifty negro.'

'It's because they distrust your government savings-banks, Sir William,' replied the planter. 'They think their money can be seized for taxes. If you would get that idea out of their heads, they'd be as saving as the Coolies. The negro hoards, though he does not save. The Coolie saves, but he does not hoard. But the truth is, the one is quite as fond of money as the other.'

'I should not have thought they were a saving

people,' interposed Sir George. 'They must spend a great deal on their dress.'

'So they do—so they do, Sir George,' replied Mr Campbell; 'far more than they have any business to spend. And no negro would condescend to take care of his clothes; he would think that niggardly. Don't you see the way the women go about the streets, sweeping up the dust with their long starched petticoats? If any of them was to hold up her dress, she would be sneered at as a "mean somebody."'

'I wonder,' interposed the Commodore, 'what a negro's ideas of beauty are?'

'I am sure I don't know,' laughed the planter. 'But I do know that no one in the world is vainer of her appearance than a negress.—If you notice, Sir George, you'll see that every second girl you meet has one or two of her front teeth out.'

'I have; and wondered whether it was from eating sugar-cane or anything of the sort.'

'Nothing of the kind. She's had them pulled out to improve her looks.'

'You do not mean that seriously?' exclaimed the baronet.

'Indeed I do,' responded the planter; 'in England, the loss of even one front tooth fills a girl with dire alarm; but here, the loss of two is quite the thing! There's no accounting for taste.'

'Do you employ Coolies as well as negroes on your estate, Mr Campbell?' inquired the young baronet.

'We're obliged to,' was the reply. 'We use them as a sort of decoy-ducks to induce the negroes to work. If we could dispense with them, we would gladly do so; for they're very expensive, and need a lot of coddling and looking after; and all that takes up both time and money. Besides, they're not half so strong as the negroes. They can't do axe-work, and they're always in hospital. But we can't do without them. Since the abolition of slavery in 1838, Quashie has become so lazy and independent that he's not to be relied on. He works only when and how he pleases. Still, we're glad to get him almost on his own terms. It's a sort of secret of the trade, Sir George, and you mustn't betray us if I tell you; but the best-paying work on every estate is reserved for the negro. If he did not get that, Quashie wouldn't come near us at all.'

'But I thought your Coolies were physically a fine body of men,' replied the baronet.

'The scum of the earth, sir—the scum of the earth. The women come from the bazaars; the men are fellows who have committed some offence against the laws or the caste prejudices of their countrymen. Many of our Coolies were sepoys during the rebellion. I don't believe it is entirely the fault of our immigration agents in India. They would get us better if they could. But respectable Indians can't be got to cross "the black water," and hence our estates are recruited from the offscourings of our Indian population. However, if you're interested in the subject, you've a fine opportunity for studying it. The *Hampshire* has just arrived with a fresh consignment of Coolies on board. It's that has brought me to town. I'm going aboard her to-morrow with the Agent-general of Immigration; and if you would like to go over a Coolie ship, I'll get you permission to go with us.'

'Pray, do, Mr Campbell; I shall be very much obliged; there is nothing I should like better,' said Sir George.

'Very well; that's agreed then. We'll meet at ten to-morrow at the Agent-general's office.'

CATS: THEIR HUMANE AND RATIONAL TREATMENT.

BY DR GORDON STABLES, R.N.

CATS deserve far better treatment than they sometimes receive at the hands of those who own them. This more often than not is the result of a want of knowledge of what is necessary to keep pussy alive and comfortable. Many people have an idea that anything is good enough for a dog; but alas! a cat is supposed to be able to maintain existence without even a share of whatever may be implied by that word 'anything.' Some people look upon poor pussy as simply a kind of clever invention for catching mice, an animated vermin-trap, a creature that never requires any food except that which she herself may capture, and no attention or kindness of any kind. Thanks to her wonderful nature and instincts, even a neglected cat will manage to support life after a fashion; but there is as much difference between a well-fed and properly cared-for puss, and a mere mouser, as there is between a hungry wolf of the wilds, and the honest 'bawsent'-faced collie that sleeps on the hearthrug, or accompanies its master in his walks abroad.

Any one who wants to find out what a gentle, affectionate, and grateful animal a cat really is, has only to make the following experiment. Let him get a young one, not a kitten, but a cat of about a year old, that has been starved and ill-treated and regarded as a kind of wild beast, or kept about some barnyard merely on sufferance, in order to keep the mice away. Let him begin by feeding this cat regularly, talking to it, and using it kindly; let him bring it into the house every night, and give it a bed of some kind to lie on in a warm corner, and teach it by gentle means habits of cleanliness, &c.; let him do this, and he will be surprised at the difference in the poor creature's manners and appearance even in the space of a month or six weeks; and before a year is over, he will be as fond of that cat, as any human being can be of one of the lower animals. And pussy will be just as fond of her master, and have never a thought in her heart but how to please him.

Now, I do not mean to waste space in giving many anecdotes illustrative of pussy's tricks and manners; but one is so fresh in my mind at the present moment, and altogether so strange, that I cannot refrain from penning it. I was told the story when in Jersey, judging a show of dogs, cats, and rabbits, and have every reason to believe it is strictly true. Two cats belonging to a gentleman in that island had kittens at the same time; the young ones were destroyed, with the exception

of two, one being humanely left to each mother. During the night, a kitten died; but its parent had carried it to the other part of the room, where her companion was, and exchanged it for the living one, which she was found suckling. To make certain there had been no mistake, the dead and the living kittens were restored to their respective mothers. In a short time, the exchange was again made; and the same thing occurred a third time; but now, instead of going back to her own bed, this eccentric pussy escaped to an outside hayloft with her living freight, and there she reared it.

I have proved over and over again that, properly cared for and properly trained, cats are cleanly and regular in all their ways—that they are wonderfully sagacious—that they are quite as wise in their own way and as high in the scale of animal existence as dogs are—that they are tractable and eminently teachable—that, indeed, they can be taught tricks like a poodle—that they are honest, and not thieves—capital vermin-killers, very fond of other animals as playmates, such as dogs, guinea-pigs, rabbits, and birds—that they are very fond of their young, very much attached to children—that they like their homes, but *love* a kind master or mistress. But a badly used or thoughtlessly treated cat is quite the reverse of all I have described, though for the sake of humanity I will admit that most of the bad usage to which our pussies are subjected is the result of want of thought.

Cats are liable to a good many ailments; but most of them are preventable by careful feeding and kind treatment. Let us see, then, what pussy really needs to keep her well and happy.

Strange though it may appear to some, she requires food every day of her life, and preferably twice a day. Now, although people who keep and breed what may be called show-cats, splendid Persians and Angoras, &c.—for the kittens of which they easily obtain prices ranging from two to ten pounds or more—make food for their favourites separately, this is not necessary where only one or two cats are kept in a family. Here the mistake usually made is that of supposing the bits thrown to the cat during the family meal-time by those she solicits are quite enough for her. Give her morsels by all means, if she begs prettily for them; but immediately after the family have breakfasted or dined, pussy's dish ought to be well filled with something really edible, something she cares for. This may be bread and milk, or potatoes mashed up in milk, or preferably in gravy; but meat of some kind she ought to have once a day at least. Cats depend more on meat even than dogs do. Boiled lights are very good; but it should be remembered that this kind of food looks more than it is; it is light by name and light in nature, so a good share must be given. It should be cut up fine and a little milk put over it.

Fish is a great treat for a cat; in many cases of illness, they will eat this when they can take

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nothing else. Horse-flesh, when it can be had, is good occasionally, but it has a laxative tendency. Nice tripe or cowheel is excellent; but indeed nothing comes amiss that one eats one's-self, only we must be careful to give bread and vegetables as well as meat. Raw beef minced finely is often given to cats when ill; so are boiled eggs and cream. Milk seems to be one of the necessities of life to a cat; let it be good and abundant.

Few people know that cats cannot be kept in health unless they be supplied with water. If a cat does not get water, she will have to help herself to it. This in the country she has generally a chance of doing, but not in towns. A saucer should be always kept in a corner for pussy, and the water ought to be fresh, and fresh every morning.

Another thing that cats do not thrive well without, is grass. Herein, again, the happy country cat has the advantage of the feline dweller in cities; nevertheless, grass may be pulled for a cat. I have known it placed between two bricks in the corner of the scullery, where it would keep fresh for a week, and be always handy when the little creature wanted it.

There is no domestic animal in our possession more fond of cleanliness in every way than puss. Habits of cleanliness in the house are very easily taught; and a well-cared-for and properly treated cat will even teach her kittens to be cleanly. But pussy's food ought always to be nice and clean, and the dish that contains it should be washed every day. Putting fresh food among that which has been left from a former meal, is a sure way of preventing a cat from enjoying, or even touching it.

If well fed, a cat's coat is beautifully soft, thick, and sheeny, and she seems to take a delight in keeping it so. When ill or neglected, the coat becomes rough and thin. It is usually after a meal that puss sits down contentedly to wash herself and pay attention to her personal appearance; and those who breed beautiful cats, take advantage of this, and give the animal a tiny bit of butter after her dinner, or put a little cream on her paws. She requires no other incentive to cause her to proceed forthwith to groom herself all over. The oil of the butter and her own saliva seem to form a kind of soap, which acts like magic when applied by means of her rough tongue to the coat. Sometimes a cat requires to be washed. The water should be lukewarm, the soap the mildest procurable, and the towels with which she is dried very soft; and after the operation, she ought to be put into a clean room until thoroughly dry, or, what is better still, placed in a clean empty cage near the fire.

If the owner of a cat cares anything for it, or has any regard for the comfort of his neighbour, he will do all in his power to keep it in the house at night. This is best accomplished by making a practice of feeding the animal late in the evening. A late dinner makes pussy very regular in her habits, especially if she is always sure of getting it at the same time.

The possession of property involves certain duties; when that property is a pussy cat, we have a duty to perform not only to our favourite but to our neighbours as well. To kill cats in gardens by means of traps or poison is extremely cruel as well as cowardly; but at the same time

the temptation to do so is very great when one finds his beautiful flower-beds torn up by the claws of nocturnal marauders; or his valuable pet pigeons, or even his chickens, killed and carried away. If people would only feed their pussies well at home and keep them indoors at night, such things would not happen.

There are many wanton cruelties perpetrated on cats, that I hardly care to mention. For the mere love of mischief, or sport as it is erroneously called, these harmless necessary animals are often hunted and torn in pieces by dogs. Again, there are those who capture and destroy cats for the sake of the skin, which fetches a good price at the dealers; but, for the sake of humanity, I trust I am mistaken when I add that, under the notion that it retains the gloss on the coat, the unhappy creatures are sometimes skinned ere dead.*

Kind though her owner may wish to be, puss may nevertheless suffer from her owner's thoughtlessness. It is cruel not to feed a cat abundantly, regularly, and with food suitable for her wants. It is cruel not to give her plenty of fresh water daily, and an allowance of good sweet milk; and it is foolishly cruel to keep from her the necessities of life, with the idea that it will make her a better hunter; for mouse-catching needs patience, and only a well-fed cat has that. It is cruel to turn a cat out at night against her will, and a person who makes a practice of so doing has no right to own one. It is crueler still to 'wander' a cat that you do not wish to keep, and have not the courage to mercifully deprive of life.

Another species of cruelty to be avoided is that of destroying all a cat's kittens at once. One should always be left, and for this little thing a good home should invariably be provided. It is cruel, on the other hand, to keep more than one or two alive; for, as it is next to impossible to find homes for them all, they are sure to turn out starvelings, and add to the list of homeless wanderers.

But the worst form of cruelty of any is that cold-blooded species of cat-murder—I can call it by no other name—which consists in leaving the poor creature to starve at home while the family is gone on the annual holiday. There is no excuse for this; for cats are capital travellers, and if they love their owners—as, if well used, they invariably do—they will take kindly to the new abode even in a day. If, however, it be thought too much trouble to take pussy to the hills or the seaside, surely a kind neighbour could be found to take charge of the animal in the absence of her owners. In Edinburgh, where, we regret to say, the habit of allowing the cat to shift for herself while her owners flit to country quarters, has been lamentably prevalent, such cases are now taken cognisance of by the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals.

When a cat gets too old to be of any use, and is even a burden to itself, then it ought to be destroyed in as humane a manner as possible. I have tried all plans. A very large dose of morphia causes death speedily; but often, instead of falling at once into the sleep that precedes extinction of life, the animal has a fit of delirium. A cat, however, if placed in a box from which the air

* Let the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals take note.—ED.

is excluded, and a spongeful of chloroform placed in one corner, quickly succumbs, and moves no more. Drowning is somewhat cruel, in my opinion.

If cats are properly treated, they seldom ail. As a rule, they can treat their own complaints far more scientifically than either a vet. or a doctor knows how to do. Grass is their principal medicine. This acts in one of three ways, according to the quantity taken—in large doses, being an emetic; in medium, an aperient; and in small doses, an alterative and antiscorbutic. When a cat is very ill, she gets away of her own accord into a quiet dark corner, and abstains from taking food, although she may come out now and then to drink water. It is evident, then, that she knows the value of rest.

When a town cat falls sick, and is seen looking miserable and strange, with a staring coat and injected eye, and if she has no appetite, and wants to hide away out of sight, it will be real kindness to place her in a clean attic or some unused room, letting her have plenty of fresh water to drink, and giving her also a dose of medicine. A grain or two of sulphate of zinc repeated at intervals of ten minutes, will act as an emetic. When the stomach settles, give her a small tea-spoonful of warm castor-oil, and leave her alone for four-and-twenty hours.

There is far more difficulty in giving medicine to a cat than to a dog; the animal is more suspicious, and also more difficult to handle. A cat will not, as a rule, bite intentionally; but she can make terrible use of her claws. The medicine to be administered may be in the form of a liquid, a powder, or a pill. If the first named, puss must be wrapped in a rug or shawl, and held by one person, while another opens the mouth, and, little by little at a time, pours down the medicine. Care should be taken not to soil the fur. A pill is given more quickly; but the upper jaw and under jaw should be kept well apart, and the pill put far down, while the finger must be clear before the mouth is permitted to close, or a very ugly not to say dangerous wound may be the result. Sometimes it is as well to rub the medicine to be given, on pussy's paws; she will set herself to clean them, and so the physic will be licked up. Tiny pills or powders may be given in raw meat, and tasteless powders placed on the tongue.

Cats are subject to many illnesses of the digestive canal. Chronic inflammation of the stomach is by no means rare, usually caused from something the creature has picked up or eaten. Poisoning is often suspected, but it is rarely indeed that a cat eats poison. When ill, she ought to have free access to grass, which she will use as an emetic. A mild dose—small tea-spoonful—of warm castor-oil should be given to commence with, or twice the quantity of salad oil, and this should be repeated about twice a week. Feed only on milk-food, and put three times a day on the tongue, two or three grains of the trisnitrate of bismuth. Keep her warm and at home.

Diarrhoea and dysentery are diseases from which cats suffer. Careful nursing is needed and warmth, and the least irritating kinds of diet; and for medicine, we must trust to chalk-powder, and opium or morphia. Half a grain of solid opium may be given twice or thrice a day, or the solution of muriate of morphia in three-drop doses every two hours.

Bronchitis or severe cold is one of pussy's ailments. I direct hot fomentations frequently to be applied to the head, a mild diet, rather low at first; followed by strengthening food, if she begins to lose flesh—beef-tea, raw meat, eggs, and a little wine, &c.

Cats are subject to many kinds of fits. These, however, should not be looked upon as diseases, but as symptomatic of a diseased system. In the fit, little more can be done except keeping puss from hurting herself and letting her have fresh air; or the nose may be lanced with a very sharp penknife, just enough to let a few drops of blood be squeezed out. Afterwards, it may be as well to give a worm-powder. Area-nut fresh grated is best; and the dose would be about ten or twelve grains mixed with butter or lard, on an empty stomach, following up in an hour with a dose of castor-oil. If fits recur again and again, try by every means to get her into good condition, not fat, and give a grain each of the iodide and bromide of potassium three times a day. Cod-liver oil may also be given; and whenever it is, a dose of castor-oil should be administered once a week.

When a cat takes jaundice, it seldom gets over the disease. I advise the use, to begin with, of Glauber salts, a small tea-spoonful diluted with plenty of water, and given gradually. If it makes the cat vomit, it can do no harm; if it acts as an aperient, it will do good. Give the following pill thrice a day: Croscote, three drops; aromatic powder, five grains. Make into ten pills with bread-crumbs. Give a grain of calomel every night; but watch the symptoms. It is not intended to purge too much. If she gets better, diet carefully, and give cod-liver oil, and a quinine pill made of one-eighth of a grain of sulphate of quinine and a very tiny bit of conserve of roses. This is a handy conditioning pill in many ways. But if half a grain of rhubarb and a grain of ginger be added, it makes it all the more effectual. Give it thrice a day for a fortnight.

Mange is caused by a skin parasite. The pussy must be washed; she must be well fed; and all red or irritable places must be rubbed with an unguent composed of the green iodide of mercury ointment and the compound sulphur ointment, twice a day. Wash three times a week. Feed very well, and keep extra dry and warm; and let her have a little sulphur in the food, and a dose of oil once a week.

Ulcers or sores must be kept very clean, and occasionally touched with nitrate-of-silver lotion, if they seem sluggish in healing. Wash every day with water in which a few drops of carbolic acid have been well mixed. If an ointment be needed, there is nothing better than that of the benzoated oxide of zinc.

If the eyes are inflamed, bathe them frequently in lukewarm water, remove all dirt, and use an ordinary eyewash.

Never take a cat's kittens all away at once, else she may have milk-fever. Bleeding may be required; but, at all events, aperients are necessary, and a little fever mixture, as for a child. This any chemist can prepare.

Never use harsh remedies to a sick cat. Let the ailing one have a good soft bed, plenty of water, and grass within reach; and remember

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in treating her, that she can hardly be kept too warm and comfortable, if the temperature is an equable one, and the air in the room fresh and pure.

'LETTING THINGS DOWN.'

We were fortunate enough to know and love a good couple, who, years ago, lived in a comfortable mansion, and had all the surroundings of elegance and affluence. These considerations, as well as the kindness shown to us collectively and individually, made us rejoice when our holidays allowed us to visit the said abode, which seemed to our moderate views a very palace of delights. There was a large old garden; a hothouse full of fine grapes, usually very much at our service; a carriage we could use when we liked; a pleasant host and hostess to receive us when we returned tired from our drives or wanderings through the delightful meadows which lay round the house. There was no end of felicity at Eaglehall; and the interior of the house was as nice and well ordered as the outside was trim and prettily arranged. There were peace, plenty, and prosperity; young, happy faces beamed about us all day; and there seemed no end to the solid comforts and enjoyments then to be met with.

In the course of years, however, this system of things went on slowly but steadily deteriorating. The children of the house grew up and went out into the world—some successfully, others the reverse; the hand of change fell, not disastrously, but naturally on the good old host and hostess; things by little and little 'went down.' There was no want of money, only a want of heart or apparent interest in things. The place was no longer quite so pleasant to visit; and the last time we set foot within its doors the shadow of the last awful change was hovering over the kind old mistress, and the ancient faithful domestics had gone away, and others, rude, vulgar, and greedy, had come instead. We thought sadly, as we turned away from the familiar scene, that much of the discomfort prevalent came from things being at first allowed to 'go down.'

Now, we have been thinking a good deal upon this subject lately, and we would, as older folks, advise our young friends to avoid as far as in them lies that indifference of spirit which allows things to fall into disuse, disrepair, or disregard, merely for want of a little 'keeping-up.' It has been pithily said, 'that though money be scarce, soap and water are always abundant'—a fact surely not known to the world at large, judging from the way in which people, from sorrow, indifference, poverty, or other causes, allow even their outward appearance to 'go down' perseveringly.

'W—— is surely hard up,' said one lately, in talking of the apparently prosperous head of a flourishing firm. The man referred to was in the prime of life, usually tall, erect, and well 'put on,' and well known to have the best business in the place. For some little time it had been observed that he no longer walked with his usual air; his clothes looked shabby and soiled, and his hair and beard were badly kept. His manner, too, had become reserved and sour;

so when a new Company opened in the same town, with offices whose plate-glass windows and freshly painted doors invited attention, people went away from W——, and he lost several excellent orders, which naturally he would have got. Nothing, all this time, had happened to cause W——'s deterioration but a want of energy and determination to keep himself 'up to the mark;' so the result was that people thought he had 'gone down' in money matters, and so left him, causing him in a few months to 'go down' altogether.

'Rub up your brasses, Sally,' said an energetic husband to a wife, who being, when first married, clean and orderly, was degenerating into a slattern, and failing to 'keep up' the interior of the pretty cottage. So we may all in our several ways find plenty 'brasses to rub up;' and if our own spirits are gloomy enough at times, we may at any rate keep the externals about us bright for the sake of others. He is a poor-spirited being who, because things go contrary to his wishes, gives himself up to the despondency that would induce tawdriness in house or garden, or personal self-reverence; and the brave soul that looks well to the comfort of those around, and works on steadily, with perhaps a breaking heart, is worthy of the highest veneration.

'Brush your hair, Betty, and then things won't look so bad,' was the homely advice given by an old friend to a woman whose husband had lost money by the failure of a bank, and who could not see the force of the wife sitting tawdry and dishevelled, with unswept floor and untidy hearth and unprepared dinner, because this calamity had happened.

We all know how in the very presence of death itself, externals help to make the pangs of friends and watchers scarcely so keen as discomfort and penury would do. 'All was done that could be done, and the family is well left,' is often the comfortable reflection of the survivors after a death. The same thing could not be said if everything had been allowed to 'go down' only because the malady was hopeless.

Some people took a dull house which had been allowed to 'go down' by former tenants. They found everything as bad as possible—paper hanging off the walls, grates rusty, drains all wrong, and a general look of decay about the place, though it had been inhabited for years and just newly vacated. In a week, all was changed: there were fresh but inexpensive papers for each room, the grates were well rubbed and polished; soap and water, and windows opened for fresh air, did the rest, and the house was no longer dull. The former tenants had not cared to 'keep things up.' It is much easier, by care and very small expenditure, to 'keep things up,' than it is to 'let them down,' and then institute a thorough reformation. An old house with which we were familiar, a mere shell, with thin walls and tottering floors and rat-eaten woodwork, was yet the very prettiest abode in our memory, simply because it was well 'kept.' A coat of paint nearly every year, carpets fresh and new, good order and cleanliness in every corner, and you forgot its age, and perhaps its decay.

The same system should be pursued with regard to mind, habits, and cultivation, as to houses or gardens. Let all young people carefully 'keep

up' the accomplishments learned at school; let them as far as possible cultivate every talent. We have seen men and women, careful to preserve in all things the habits of youth, retain a freshness in middle-life and old age which was perfectly astonishing. There is no need whatever for any one 'going down;' a high standard of excellence placed before us at the first may lead to that nobler and better life which grows brighter and brighter 'even to the perfect day.'

THE RESUSCITATED IRISHMAN.

A GALWAY gentleman was wont to tell the following humorous story of unexpected resuscitation: "That many people are buried alive, is beyond a doubt. I know an instance that I will relate to you, which I may say happened in my own establishment, for our huntsman, Jack Burke, was the subject of it. Jack had a dangerous illness—a fever, I think it was—and, to all appearance, died. He was duly coffined, and as duly waked; and such a wake and funeral were never remembered in Galway; for Jack was a universal favourite, a character and a wag, and crowds came from far and near to the burying. The bewailing cries were so loud as the procession moved along the road, that they could be heard a mile off; and by the time they reached the churchyard, all were hoarse with crying. It is the custom in these parts to carry the coffin three times round the church, after which it is laid by the side of the open grave. All present sink upon their knees in prayer, the men reverently uncovering. The immediate relatives of the deceased close round the remains, and for some minutes there is total silence. The contrast between this death-like hush and the loud cry of the funeral wail is striking, and the appearance of the motionless kneeling crowd very impressive.

"On the present occasion, the path round the church was rough and stony, and the ground uneven with graves; so that poor Jack, while being carried his three rounds, was sadly jolted in his coffin.

"A rousing leap we had to take, surely, when we came to Tom Grady's tombstone," said one of the bearers afterwards. "Enough to wake the dead, it was. We couldn't put our feet upon the new clean grave, and the decent man not a week inside; so there was nothing else but to hop it."

"Whether or not consciousness was jolted into Jack by this "hop," is uncertain; but certain it is that the dead silence customary after laying down the coffin was broken, not by the usual smothered sobs, but by vehement thumpings at the lid! It was quickly opened, and Jack sat up. After staring round with an air of comical bewilderment on his astonished friends, a great-coat was thrown over his graveclothes, and he was helped up on a jaunting-car, and in this plight driven home.

"The old woman who had been left behind to keep the house when all went to the funeral, and who was telling her beads over the kitchen fire, was nearly frightened out of her senses at the apparition. There was some difficulty in persuading her that it was Jack himself, and not his ghost, she saw.

"Meantime, Jack had drained a bowl of milk that was on the dresser, and now looked wildly about.

"Is it wanting anything ye are, my poor fellow?" said his friends. "Lie down now, and compose yourself. A drop of spirits, with a bit of nourishment and a stretch on the bed, will do ye good, after the start ye got, finding yourself—God save us!—in the coffin. There now, be aisy, do!"

"But Jack would not "be aisy." He kept glaring about him and searching for something; staggering here and there, looking behind doors and shutters, and peering into cupboards.

"The saints be good to us!" whimpered the old woman; "his mind is gone—gone with the fright. Masther, darlint, what ails ye? Is it the hunger, the long fast that's putting ye astray? Sit down, for the love of the blessed Virgin, and I'll fry you a shave of bacon, and mix a tumbler of punch in half a second, to rise your poor heart and put life into you. Do now, avic!"

"Arrah, will you get out of my way, and lave me alone," cried Jack. "It's my stick I'm looking for—my stick, for my wife, bad luck to her! when she comes home. And if I don't give her such a lambastin' as never mortal woman got before, my name isn't Jack Burke, that's all!—Look here!" he exclaimed, plucking at his shirt—which had seen better days—while he panted with rage and weakness. "Six brand-new shirts, whole and sound as the day they left the weaver—without tear or rent, patch or darn—I left behind me; and look at the rags she dresses up my poor carcass in! making a fool of me in the coffin when I'm dead and gone, and bringing me to shame before the neighbours and the country. Ah! the stingy one! to grudge the decent linen to the boy that owned her! Only let me catch a hold of her, and see if I don't make her four bones smart for it!"

"With much difficulty, poor Jack's wrath was calmed, and he was got to bed by his friends, Mrs Jack in the meantime wisely keeping out of the way. He never forgave her the ragged shirt—to him, the feature in the affair.

"To "make an appearance" at their burial is the ambition of the lower orders of Irish. They will undergo privation, sooner than pawn or wear the sacred under-garment laid up to "dress the corpse in." Thus it was that the indignity to his remains was so paramount in Jack's mind, that ever after, it completely set in the background his narrow escape from the dreadful fate of being buried alive."

SUMMER TERM.

1882.

Few months have waned, few days gone by, since we Walked hand in hand beneath a summer sun,
And watched the silver-rippled Cherwell run
To join fair Isis, hurrying to the sea.
We laughed and loved, nor could for pure joy see
How lowliest laugh is laughter well-nigh done,
And sweetest love, love better not begun,
How brightest days will ever swiftest flee.
The summer days are fled, and Cherwell's stream
Flows sad beneath white banks and branches bare,
And I stand lonely, 'twixt the white and gray,
Like as some mourner waking from a dream
All filled with melody and faces fair,
Mourns music dead, and fairness passed away.

J. DE K-HANKIN.

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